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SUBJECT: 63RD UNGA: BOLIVIA'S DELEGATION SPECULATION

REF: STATE 72078

Classified By: A/EcoPol Chief Brian Quigley for reasons 1.4 (b)(d)

¶1. (U) Embassy contacts at the Bolivian Ministry of Foreign Relations tell us there will be no official delegation list for the UNGA General Debate September 23-October 1 until after the August 10 recall referendum on the mandates of President Evo Morales and department prefects (state governors).

¶2. (C) Although the delegation's composition is a matter of speculation that "could change until the last minute," our MFA contacts claim this year's delegation will likely closely resemble the same players as last year. A reliable MFA contact told us in mid-July that the delegation would include Foreign Minister David Choquehuanca, Vice Foreign Minister Hugo Fernandez, and an entourage of senior palace advisors. He said it is likely that President Morales will also attend, assuming he survives the referendum, building on what Morales considered a very successful appearance last year and giving him an opportunity to characterize the August 10 results to an international audience. If Morales attends, Presidency Minister Juan Ramon Quintana will also likely attend.

¶3. (C) U.S. Desk Officer Yuri Arce told PolOff July 30 that Morales does indeed plan to attend and that because by law the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister of Presidency could not be out of the country at the same time, only Minister Quintana or Minister Choquehuanca would accompany Morales. Arce said in that scenario, it was more likely Quintana would accompany Morales, with Choquehuanca possibly attending portions of the General Debate not attended by Morales and Quintana. Arce indicated this was a question of irritation to Choquehuanca, who feels Quintana is already a "second foreign minister."

¶4. (C) Given the current state of relations and high-level meetings July 21 with A/S Tom Shannon in La Paz, post recommends no senior-level meetings with the Bolivian delegation at the UNGA barring an unlikely and significant improvement in relations. Unless a meeting includes new messages on specific, contentious issues, another high-level meeting at the UNGA is unlikely to facilitate any diplomatic breakthrough and may be misconstrued by the Bolivians as a sign that relations are better than facts dictate. Be advised that Bolivia recently appointed a new UN Permanent Representative: Efrain Hugo Siles Alvarado.
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